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THE POLITICAL ATTITUDE OF THE MORMONS.

To make the position of the Mormons in Utah clear to the general reader; to deal with the subject without prejudice and yet to state the truth, is a difficult undertaking. Toward the United States the Mormon power observes the forms of republican polity, while in fact it is a despotism as absolute in its control over its own people as ever existed on the earth. That such an institution has been able to plant itself in the heart of the United States, to maintain itself, and to steadily increase in power, is one of the anomalies of the times. It reveals, on the one hand, how slow a perfectly free people are to realize when a serious danger threatens them; on the other, what results cunning and unscrupulous leaders may achieve through appeals to men whose minds are clouded by ignorance and steeped in superstition.

Ask nine out of every ten men in the country what there is objectionable in the Mormon faith and in Mormon practices, and the answer will be that polygamy is preached and practiced. That behind polygamy there is in the Mormon creed a deadly menace to free government, few suspect. And yet this is true. The Mormons have a "celestial kingdom of God," and a "kingdom of God on earth." This latter means the rule of its people in temporal things; and the dream of the Mormon leaders is, that under this rule the governments of the earth will one by one be brought, until the whole world shall be subjugated. They teach explicitly that every government framed by man is illegal; declare that their government was given them direct from heaven; that the president and apostles of their church stand on earth the direct vicegerents of the Almighty; and that, by revelations, dreams, and other jugglery, they are at all times endowed with the wisdom to guide their people aright in all things, temporal as well as spiritual. Their leaders claim to be

infallible, not in the sense of a court of last appeal, but as men inspired, who catch the thoughts and pronounce the words of Deity. And the claim is admitted by their followers. With such a belief impressed upon the plastic hearts of children, it is easy to enforce discipline. Then, in worldly knowledge they are instructed very little, the policy of the church being to keep the masses poor and ignorant. They are forbidden to read books or journals that attack their faith or appeal to their reason; while the quality of their own journals will be understood when we mention that, within the past year, they have prescribed as a certain safeguard against, and remedy for, diphtheria and other diseases which come of blood-poisoning, more earnest prayers, more punctual and faithful obedience to the commands of their elders. Naturally, men so enthralled are mere slaves. Their first and only real allegiance is given to their church and chiefs. As between their creed and the government of the United States, the latter is nothing; when any law of the land conflicts with a church rule, the law is held as naught, and, to defeat the execution of such a law, perjury is held to be, instead of a crime, a virtue. Repeated instances of this have been given in the courts of Utah by Mormons, from Brigham Young and Daniel H. Wells down to the herd which live but to obey the orders of the leaders. Dora Young, a daughter of Brigham, who has broken away from the Mormon church, declares that the first thing to open her eyes to the atrocities practiced, under the name of religion, in Utah, was the wholesale perjury resorted to by her father and by others high in authority in the Mormon church, in order to circumvent the laws and to defeat justice.

To the ignorant masses in Utah thousands from Europe are annually added,—creatures who, in their native lands, were so miserable that, finding here a home with plenty of vegetables, fruit, meat, and fish, they are easily impressed with the belief that all this is a direct interposition of divine grace in their behalf. The result is a people who, in their daily lives, are peaceable, industrious, frugal, and courteous, but who, at the command of their leaders, would, in a day, rise up, lay their cities and towns waste, and with their flocks and herds go in search of a new home, north, south, east, or west, as directed; and whether committing atrocities, or themselves perishing from exposure, would say their prayers and sing their hymns in the very ecstasy of fanaticism.

Of the one hundred and forty-five thousand people in Utah, more than one hundred thousand—probably one hundred and twenty thousand—are Mormons. And the hive has commenced to swarm. To-day they hold the balance of power in Idaho and Arizona, and are swiftly peopling Washington, Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado. The vote of Idaho, for Congressmen, was carried at the late election by a brief order of George Q. Cannon, directing Mormons in that territory to vote for a certain man. Cannon did not leave his office in Salt Lake City; but all the Mormons in Idaho voted as a unit. Allow Mormonism to go on unchecked for ten years longer, and Cannon will, from the same office, dictate the elections in all the region between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, except California and Oregon; that is, he will hold under absolute control, as in Utah, or the balance of power, as in Idaho, a region as great in area as all the United States east of the Mississippi River. It is a region of measureless resources, the seat of a future empire; it is a succession of mountains rich in minerals, and valleys, many of which contain magnificent land. The mountains are principally valuable for their mines. The miner is a thorough nomad; his eyes are forever fixed on the heights which promise mineral croppings, and when one point does not answer his expectations, he seeks another. The Mormon cares nothing for the hills, except for a summer range for his stock, and for the market which he there finds among the miners for his surplus farm products; but he fastens on the arable lands of the valleys with a tenacity which never lets go. In this way every arable acre and almost every spring which commands a stock range in Utah has been appropriated by him; and now this noiseless conquest is extending to other territories. In their advance the Mormons are like the Chinese: they will work for Gentiles for money; sell Gentiles anything they have to sell; buy land from them; but there transactions cease; their purchases they make at their own coöperative stores, and, except to convert labor or supplies into money, they hold themselves aloof from Gentiles. They belong to a kingdom foreign in its ways and foreign in fealty to this country. But for the mines no outsider could find anything whereby he could earn a living in Utah. From this rule, perhaps, the Israelites might be excepted—the old-time polygamists. Were it to suit some political party to give Statehood to Utah, every Gentile

would be forced to move away; the mines would be taxed so that it would be impossible to work them, and nothing else would remain. The Mormons have shown their eagerness to do this already. Their legislature passed a bill laying a tax of twenty per cent. on the gross proceeds of mines, and the veto of the governor was all that prevented the bill becoming a law. Libel laws would make it impossible to publish a liberal newspaper, and other laws would be added until there would be but one of two things for Gentiles to do—either emigrate or fight; and they are but one to seven or eight of the whole people. The Mormons are as one in thought. All Mormons are not polygamists, but as the men of the South were solid in 1861, when the four hundred thousand slaveholders appealed to them, so the Mormons follow, with implicit trust and obedience, their leaders. They stand toward the world as does a hollow square on a battle-field, bristling in every direction, hostile everywhere, presenting a solid front on all sides, and apparently exposing no weak spot, no point where shields are not joined and spears thrust out menacingly.

In Utah the ballot is given to women, and the law is so framed that it permits alien women to vote within a month after reaching Utah, without so much as requiring from them an oath of allegiance to the United States. Of course these are like the men, and do simply what they are instructed by their chiefs to do, understanding no more of what they are doing than a wild native of the Cannibal Islands would of the "Resolutions of Ninety-eight." It was this *oneness*, this utter death of free thought, this slavish obedience to the masters, and this entire prostitution of free and popular government, and not polygamy, which caused the men of Missouri and Illinois to arise in a frenzy of rage and drive the first nucleus of the bogus creed from their midst.

How has this power waxed so strong? To answer the question a brief review is necessary. There is no doubt that the original Mormon creed was evolved from the crafty brain of Sidney Rigdon. Rigdon was born and reared in the region of the Whisky Insurrection in Pennsylvania. The first shot in that early rebellion was fired but a few rods from Rigdon's father's house. The man who was afterward Rigdon's pastor was a leader with Mike Fink and his brother outlaws, and was taken to Philadelphia in irons. Rigdon was expelled from the First Baptist Church in

Pittsburgh, in 1823, for heresy. He was then teaching "Common Stock" (communism), and afterward drifted naturally into Mormonism, for he was steeped with incendiaryism before he was born. Greedy of power, with a subtle knowledge of lower human nature, he rightly judged that the best way to attain the object of his ambition was to place a chain of superstition around the necks of men. So he worked out the details of a new church. Among other things which his new religious code contained was the provision for sealing to the dead for eternity, that lost souls might still be saved through the grace of celestial marriage with those yet in the flesh who had been saved through conversion to the Mormon faith. But Rigdon had little magnetism; moreover, he had some education; for him to state in scholarly language what purported to be a revelation from on high would be to defeat his own purpose. He required an assistant, and searched until he found the subject that he required in a hood-lum and tramp who was going around the country with a "peep" stone, telling fortunes. This was Joe Smith.

Smith was born in Rutland, Vermont, about the time that Wingate, the combined forger and religious charlatan, made such a sensation there. He removed, when a youth, to Palmyra, New York, and there Rigdon found him. Smith was full of magnetism, full of warm blood, a hearty, generous fellow,—from the description an original, untutored Jim Fisk. After proper training, Smith became the prophet and Rigdon the inspiration behind him, putting cunning words in the mouth of the boor. At last Smith, finding how pleasant it was to play prophet, and flattered by the devotion paid him, drew away from the cold Rigdon. For one of his sensual nature, it was but natural to conclude that if celestial plural marriages were good, it was a grievous waste of time to wait for death to sanctify them; that real women were greatly to be preferred to doubtful and unsubstantial ghosts, and that the right thing was to be sealed to those still in the flesh. So he had a revelation; polygamy became a part of the Mormon religion, and Joe Smith a little Mohammed. Followers began to flock rapidly around Smith. Probably without being conscious of the fact, he had made *animalism* the key-stone in the arch of his creed, and given to his church all the adhesiveness which cements Christian creeds, and in addition all the fascination which, to sensual natures, clings to Mohammedism. Thenceforth the institution thrived until it became so much of a nuisance, and

took on attributes of such menace to free government, that, in a paroxysm of rage, the mob killed Smith. Though his life had been full of irregularities, in the hearts of his followers his death made him a martyred prophet who had died for his people, and ever since he has been held by them as one to be reverenced next to the Nazarene.

After Smith, Brigham Young was made the leader. Of this man it is strange how little is known by the world. While all are aware that he was a polygamist, and understand dimly that he permitted some violence in his life, the popular idea of him is that to his own people he was a patriarch ; that, beyond the shrewdness and courage which are expected of a frontier leader, he possessed the genius of a natural leader ; that within him were all the elements of a great soldier or statesman. The truth is, he was one of the very worst and meanest of men, and hardly a redeeming virtue can be pleaded as an offset for his vices and crimes. That, at last, he died peacefully in his bed is almost an impeachment of eternal justice. His own people admit that physically he was an abject coward. Possessing this infirmity, he was naturally cruel and an intolerable tyrant when intrusted with power. Intellectually he was not bright; but he was full of animal magnetism ; and, though his heart was that of a sheep, there was a great deal of wolf in his forehead ; possessing a stubbornness which never yielded, and a plausible tongue, and backed as he was by such physical and superstitious power, he held the masses of his creed in absolute subjection. They never dreamed of appealing from his commands, much less of disobeying them. His avarice was measureless, and he robbed his people for thirty years—robbed them by wholesale and retail. It is said that he never saw a beautiful woman that he did not seek to possess her, never a profitable business, fine house or horse, that he did not plan to obtain it without giving any fair compensation. Instead of being the shepherd, he perpetually preyed upon the flock. He robbed men of their property, and of their wives, and yet he lived on to old age, for was he not a prophet of the Lord, and were not his "avenging angels" always lying in wait for any who might protest ? The praise he has received, for having poor people taken to Utah and furnished with homes, is not merited. A church-fund does that work, and every immigrant is charged with the full amount, and ten per cent. interest, and the debt is a perpetual lien upon his earnings until it is paid. It is the first link forged

in the chain of slavery, which holds men slaves in Utah. Young's theory was that, to be ruled, men must be kept poor and ignorant. He bewailed the fact that there was gold and silver in the hills of Utah; forbade his people looking for or working mines; caused the first prospectors who went to Utah to be driven away or assassinated, and said: "If mines are opened, men will grow rich; with riches they will want fine houses and horses; their women will want fine clothes; and the result will be the destruction of our holy religion." He had a wonderful fondness for women, but the opening of the first millinery and dress-making establishment in Salt Lake City was "terrible" to him, as "an army with banners."

Brigham Young is dead, but no mortal can estimate the dreadful influence which his rule of thirty years had upon his people. They were molded and disciplined until they were made absolute slaves; at the same time they had had set to them, by their prophet, examples of perjury and robbery, of open murder and secret assassination, of all manner of duplicity and fraud, until at last they grew to contemplate the perpetration of any crime in the interest of their church as a mere emotionless act of duty. The women had imbibed the Christian idea that it was glorious to suffer for their church; the men clung eagerly to a faith which honored most the man whose lusts were strongest. Often, in the Tabernacle, Brigham Young preached upon the necessity, sometimes, of murder (blood-atonement) in order to save souls. The morning before and the evening succeeding the Mountain Meadows massacre, the fiends who there cut the throats of defenseless women and helpless little children were punctual and full of fervor at prayers. The effect of Brigham's rule was to consolidate, to absolutely fuse his whole people until they became an unbroken cordon around their creed. At the same time their moral sentiments became so blunted that, at the command of their chiefs, they simply obeyed, never stopping to question the right or wrong of anything. They remain substantially the same to this day.

Brigham's office fell to John Taylor, but upon George Q. Cannon his mantle, as leader, really descended. He is "First Counselor" of the president—is really the premier of the Mormon state; he is the Mormon attorney in Washington, and, notwithstanding his four wives and four broods of children, he has for years occupied a seat as delegate in Congress, and is the sweetest, smoothest, and most plausible sophist on all this round

earth. His going to Congress at first was meant directly as an insult to the United States. When Brigham Young named him for the place, he said: "I will thrust polygamy down the throats of Congress;" and he did it.

With the death of Brigham Young, the American leadership of the Mormons ceased. Taylor is an Englishman, Cannon is an Englishman, and almost all the leaders are of foreign birth. The Mormon church is a foreign kingdom, hostile in all its features to a republican form of government; it is guided and controlled by foreigners, and depends upon foreigners and the children of foreigners for future expansion and power. It is absolutely un-American in all its attributes. It is a theocracy managed by a plebeian aristocracy, for intellectually the whole organization is of low order. Now, in addition to church ties, there are family ties to hold this people in unity. The organization is fanaticism and superstition solidified. It numbers, probably, one hundred and fifty thousand souls, and is increasing as fast as polygamy and immigration can accomplish the result. It is swiftly peopling all the agricultural valleys of our richest territories, and its leaders boldly proclaim their intention to subjugate the whole Union and bring it under their rule. They exalt their church, over the state; contemn all laws which conflict with any tenet of their creed; are as careless of their oaths as a Chinaman, and bear as little allegiance to the United States government as do the Chinese. The control of the chiefs, as in Mohammedan countries, is absolute; their organization superb; the discipline of the people perfect. From tithes, \$1,000,000 annually is collected with which to strengthen their position; they are a hardy race, indifferent to hardships and privations; already they are such a power that demagogues in their own country, other demagogues in Congress, and great moneyed corporations, with their subsidized newspapers, pander to them, and it is plain that this institution, which was jeered at but a few years ago, has now become an absolute terror and menace to the United States.

The organization is governed by a code which is said to be a close copy of that which prevailed in Peru under the rule of the Incas. Of its completeness, an idea may be gained by a statement given to a correspondent of the San Francisco "Chronicle," last month, by Bishop Henry Lunt, of Cedar City, Utah. The bishop said:

"First, there is a President, and he has two Counselors. Second, there are Twelve Apostles. The President is one of them, and there are eleven others. Each of them receives a salary of \$1500 per annum. The President wields an authority equal to that of the other eleven. Third, there are seven Presidents designated as the Presidents of the Seventies. Fourth, come the Seventies, with seven Presidents over each, and a President over each of the Sevens. Fifth, come the Seventies, each body of which consists of seventy Elders. There are eighty of these Seventies in Utah, and they are compelled to report at least annually. These constitute the general authorities of the Church. Sixth, is the Head Patriarch of the Church. This dignity is hereditary when the candidate is worthy. The Head Patriarch resides at Salt Lake City, and blesses the people by the laying on of hands. The present incumbent of that sacred position is John Smith, the nephew of Prophet Joseph Smith. Seventh, there is a Presiding Bishop, who attends to the collection of tithes. Eighth, Zion is divided into twenty-three Stakes, each of which has a President. Each Stake is subdivided into wards, and each ward into districts. Each district has a quorum of Teachers, whose business it is to visit each family periodically and look after the spiritual welfare of its members. Each district has a meeting-house, Sunday-school, day-school, Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, primary association for small children which meets on Saturdays, and usually a dramatic society. Our people at Cedar City have a brass band, a string band, a coöperative store, a coöperative tannery, and a coöperative grist-mill which cost ten thousand dollars. Ninth, come the priests and deacons. In the world the priests preach and baptize, but do not lay on hands. The wisdom of man could never have devised a church organization like that. Out of a total population of one hundred and fifty thousand there are thirty thousand children in Utah under eight years of age. We have a Sunday-school organization known as the Deseret Sunday-school Union, of which George Q. Cannon is Superintendent; he is our Delegate to Congress. Then we have a perpetual immigration fund, in charge of President Albert Carrington. With this we assist in gathering our converts to these valleys. All nations are here represented."

Of the designs of the church, to the same correspondent Bishop Lunt said:

"Like a grain of mustard was the truth planted in Zion, and it is destined to spread through all the world. Our Church has been organized only fifty years, and yet behold its wealth and power. This is our year of jubilee. We look forward with perfect confidence to the day when we will hold the reins of the United States government. That is our present temporal aim; after that we expect to control the continent."

When told by the correspondent that such a scheme seems somewhat visionary, considering the fact that Utah cannot secure recognition as a State, the bishop's reply was:

"Do not be deceived; we are looking after that. We do not care for these territorial officials sent out to govern us. They are nobodies here. We do

not recognize them. Neither do we fear any practical interference by Congress. We intend to have Utah recognized as a State. To-day we hold the balance of political power in Idaho, we rule Utah absolutely, and in a very short time we will hold the balance of power in Arizona and Wyoming. A few months ago, President Snow of St. George set out with a band of priests for an extensive tour through Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Arizona, to proselyte. We also expect to send missionaries to some parts of Nevada, and we design to plant colonies in Washington Territory.

"In the past six months we have sent more than three thousand of our people down through the Sevier valley to settle in Arizona, and the movement still progresses. All this will help build up for us a political power which will, in time, compel the homage of the demagogues of the country. Our vote is solid, and will always remain so. It will be thrown where the most good will be accomplished for the Church. Then in some great political crisis, the two present political parties will bid for our support. Utah will then be admitted as a polygamous State, and the other territories we have peacefully subjugated will be admitted also. We will then hold the balance of power, and will dictate to the country. In time, our principles, which are of sacred origin, will spread throughout the United States. We possess the ability to turn the political scale in any particular community we desire. Our people are obedient. When they are called by the Church, they promptly obey. They sell their houses, lands, and stock, and remove to any part of the country the Church may direct them to. You can imagine the results which wisdom may bring about, with the assistance of a church organization like ours. It is the completest one the world has ever seen. We have another advantage. We are now and shall always be in favor of woman suffrage. The women of Utah vote, and they never desert the colors of the Church in a political contest. They vote for the tried friends of the Church, and what they do here they will do everywhere our principles and our institutions spread."

That tells the whole story. As the Gulf Stream mixes not with the waters of the ocean on which it rides, and which makes its banks, so this theocracy is pursuing and pressing its distinct way through and over the republic. During the past decade it has waived some of its atrocities, but has not surrendered a tenet of its creed, or abated one jot of its purpose of subjugation.

Is there any remedy? Yes; because, while the masses are sincere, the leaders know perfectly well that the foundation of the whole structure is laid in fraud, and that only its cement of superstition keeps it from toppling and going down with a crash. With them the institution is simply a commercial and political engine, which they work for the purpose of maintaining power and gaining more plunder from their dupes. Nothing can change old Mormons, men or women; but, despite the blinding and numbing influences of this system, under which so many hearts

of women have broken and are breaking, there is among the young a growing restlessness, an increasing sense of shame and wrong. The conditions are becoming dangerous, and the leaders see it. Utah is not Turkey, or one of the Barbary states; the air is pure; the American flag is overhead; some echoes of the boom of the power-press are beginning to be heard; some flashes of the electric light of knowledge to be seen; and some of the hopes which make jubilant the souls of American youth elsewhere are causing thrills in hearts in Utah which have heretofore been stolid. The thing to do is to strike at the animalism which underlies the Mormon system, and either by a commission, as recommended by President Hayes, or some other means, while guarding carefully all personal and property rights, and shielding those from harm who have sinned through ignorance, wrest the offices (local) from polygamists, make further plural marriages impossible, and never relax until polygamy and the rule of the Mormon church in temporal affairs are forever abandoned. This can be accomplished now. If it is postponed for fifteen years longer, nothing less than an exhaustive civil war will suffice to overcome this open enemy of republican government.

C. C. GOODWIN.